

# RECOGNITION OF CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

**HON. WALTER B. JONES**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 19, 2000

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, just over a year ago, Hurricane Floyd struck the 3rd District of North Carolina, causing billions of dollars of damage and displacing thousands of families. Eastern North Carolina is no stranger to extreme weather conditions and my district always seems to rise to the challenge posed by these natural disasters.

But there is something that goes unnoticed by many, goes unreported by the newspapers and broadcast media, goes unappreciated by many who call themselves environmentalists and goes unrecognized by many in Congress.

Corporate America and businesses in general are an integral component of our neighborhoods and communities devastated by Hurricane Floyd. Weyerhaeuser, one of the world's leading forest products companies, is one company I'd like to recognize as a good neighbor during the worse natural disaster in state's history.

I'd like to place in the RECORD this letter commending Weyerhaeuser and their efforts during this national calamity. Without responsible companies like Weyerhaeuser, recovery in Eastern North Carolina would have been impossible. On behalf of Eastern North Carolina, I rise today to thank Weyerhaeuser and their heartfelt actions after Hurricane Floyd.

NORTH CAROLINA FLOOD PUTS  
WEYERHAEUSER'S EMPLOYEE SUPPORT TO  
THE TEST

By Elizabeth Crossman, vice president of the  
Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation

NEW BERN, NC—In September, 1999, rising floodwaters in the wake of Hurricane Floyd made thousands of eastern North Carolinians homeless, and caused billions of dollars in damage to property, commerce and infrastructure. It was the worst natural disaster in the state's history. For Weyerhaeuser, one of the world's leading forest products companies, the floods posed the ultimate challenge to the company's commitment to its employees.

Weyerhaeuser operates 16 facilities or offices across North Carolina—primarily sawmills and pulp and paper manufacturing plants located near its substantial timber holdings in the coastal plain. About two-thirds of Weyerhaeuser's North Carolina workforce of about 3,000 make their homes in that section of North Carolina that bore the brunt of the storm.

Of course Weyerhaeuser faced immediate challenges in the aftermath of the floods. Several mills were either flooded themselves, or cut off from employees and raw materials by impassable roads. Communities in which the company operates were in turmoil, with schools closed, utilities disrupted and relief organizations rushing to the area to set up temporary services. While dealing with these concerns, the company's unit managers had to take inventory of who among their employees was affected and to what extent. It took several weeks to get an accurate count, with human resource and corporate affairs managers comparing notes. The impact was substantial. Over ninety active employees or retirees were harmed by the storm, most of them significantly. In fact 35 suffered total losses.

Meanwhile, at corporate headquarters in Federal Way, Washington, executives were

already understanding the seriousness of the situation in North Carolina, and crafting their first response. The Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation maintains an emergency budget to respond quickly when disasters strike communities where the company operates. This fund, for example, was tapped to support Oklahoma City after the bombing of the federal building in 1996. And, in response to the devastating flooding in eastern North Carolina, the Foundation promptly appropriated \$100,000 to support four local American Red Cross chapters who were providing immediate assistance to impacted communities.

Within weeks, Weyerhaeuser Chairman and CEO Steve Rogel was on the ground in North Carolina assessing the damage first hand and meeting with impacted employees. He heard the same message repeatedly. "Our employees told me they needed immediate funds in order to get into temporary housing, and they needed advice and help to deal with the relief agencies and insurance companies. That's where we aimed our support," said Rogel.

Rogel and his team of corporate and North Carolina advisors crafted an action plan that they put into place within days.

**Dedicated fund for employees:** Working with the United Way chapter of Pitt County in Greenville, NC, the company set up a dedicated account to collect funds for employee flood victims. A corporate gift of \$100,000 was eventually more than doubled by individual employee donations from throughout the company.

**Dedicated advocate:** A full-time manager was assigned to set up individual case files for all 93 impacted employees and assist each of them in their dealings with relief agencies, insurance companies, state and county governments, lawyers and others.

**Counseling for victims:** The company offered crisis counseling to its employees and their family members through its Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP).

**Adopt-A-Family program:** The Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation organized a program by which facilities and staff groups throughout the company could "adopt" a family affected by the floods. The Adopt-A-Family benefactors continue to provide monetary or in-kind contributions as their circumstances allow, and offer personal solace and encouragement for their colleagues in need. All 51 employees or retirees with total or significant losses have been adopted.

**Coordination of recovery efforts:** The corporate-assigned flood victim advocate, working with a team of North Carolina human resource managers, coordinates recovery activities, including distribution of money from the United Way fund to employees, soliciting donations of building materials from Weyerhaeuser manufacturing facilities and scheduling volunteers for clean-up or rebuilding projects.

As a result of Weyerhaeuser's prompt and unique approach, employee flood victims have realized many tangible benefits. Over \$257,000 has been distributed to employees in need from the dedicated fund administered by Pitt County United Way. All employees or retirees with total or significant losses were placed with facilities or staff groups through Adopt-A-Family. All have received substantial support, including in some cases automobiles, appliances, furniture, personal items and cash. All but four employees made homeless by the flood are in new or rebuilt housing, with everyone expected to be back home by year-end.

Katy Taylor, appointed by Weyerhaeuser to fill the advocate's role, has chronicled the events of the flood and the recovery in the year since. She has been moved both by the plight of the affected employees and by the

generosity of those responding. "For someone who has lost just about everything they worked all their lives for, knowing there are people supporting you in your time of need is so important. Weyerhaeuser's corporate support and the Adopt-A-Family program gave our impacted employees somewhere to turn when they thought there was none," Taylor said. Her experience has led Weyerhaeuser to conclude some key benefits that other companies could gain by following a similar approach.

Taylor defines four key benefits: productivity; pride; citizenship and partnership. Weyerhaeuser's businesses recover productivity more quickly and enjoy a closer working relationship between management and labor. Employee pride in the company is enhanced, both among those receiving support and giving it. The relationship between Weyerhaeuser and its operating communities is strengthened. Partnerships are formed among the company and public and private relief agencies that will remain long after the last employees are back in their homes. "We will carry forward many positive results that we should not have had reason to expect from such a tragedy," Taylor added.

No company wants to experience the anguish of employees and turmoil to business operations caused by events like North Carolina's flooding. However, when faced with the situation, Weyerhaeuser listened to its people on the ground, acted decisively and came up with unique approaches to difficult problems. The end result is that employees fared better than they would have otherwise, and Weyerhaeuser has a program it can deploy should disaster strike again.

## IN HONOR OF WORLD POPULATION AWARENESS WEEK 2000—SAVING WOMEN'S LIVES

**HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 19, 2000

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Population Institute's 16th annual "World Population Awareness Week (WPAW)." The theme of this event, "Saving Women's Lives," is an appropriate reminder of the hundreds of thousands of women who die each year due to reproductive health complications. Every minute of every day a woman somewhere in the world dies from pregnancy related complications, a total of 600,000 women each year.

According to Population Institute President Warner Fornos more than 350 million married women in developing countries still lack access to information, education, and the means to obtain a range of modern family planning methods. This problem is further exacerbated by the fact that a disproportionately large share of the poorest of the poor and malnourished in the world are women and girls.

In addition to focusing on the status of women around the world, World Population Awareness Week strives to develop awareness to the environmental and social complications caused by rapid population growth across the globe. Two hundred thirty organizations from 62 countries around the world co-sponsored World Population Awareness Week, including the Family Planning Association of India, the National Association of Family Welfare of Cameroon, and the Educational Foundation for Reproductive Health of Cambodia. Over 200 mayors across the United